United Nations S/PV.4359

Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4359th meeting

Tuesday, 28 August 2001, 10.30 a.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Valdivieso	(Colombia)
Members:	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	China	Mr. Shen Guofang
	France	Mr. Doutriaux
	Ireland	Mr. Corr
	Jamaica	Mr. Ward
	Mali	Mr. Touré
	Mauritius	Mr. Koonjul
	Norway	Mr. Strømmen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Mahbubani
	Tunisia	Mr. Jerandi
	Ukraine	Mr. Krokhmal
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Eldon
	United States of America	Mr. Hume

Agenda

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999).

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01-52198 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.40 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

The President *(spoke in Spanish)*: I would like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Belgium, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Sahovic (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) took a seat at the Council table; Mr. De Ruyt (Belgium) and Mr. Kerim (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) took the seats reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President *(spoke in Spanish)*: In the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Guéhenno to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting the Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, Under Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations.

I now give the floor to Mr. Guéhenno.

Mr. Guéhenno: I am pleased to brief members of the Security Council on developments in Kosovo since the last briefing on 26 July 2001.

I will focus today on outlining developments in the main priority areas: preparations for Kosovo-wide elections and the transfer to provisional self-government; engagement of the minority communities and implementation of confidence-building measures to bridge the divide between communities; and efforts to improve law and order.

First, as regards the implementation of the Constitutional Framework, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is now finalizing the structure of the institutions of provisional self-government, in which the departments of the current Joint Interim Administrative Structure will be streamlined into a more manageable number of ministries. In order to build political consensus on the future structures, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has consulted the local leadership, who have expressed general support for a reduced number of ministries. In order to gain acceptance and understanding of provisional self-government among the local population, more than 300,000 booklets explaining the Constitutional Framework have now been distributed in Albanian and Serbian, and a Turkish translation is in preparation.

Alongside preparations at the central level, the consolidation of municipal structures continues, with further efforts to devolve authority to municipalities in various sectors as specified in UNMIK regulation 45/2000 on municipal self-government, in order to build democratic-governance capacity. Parallel with the devolution of authority, however, has been an increasing tendency on the part of the municipal assemblies to challenge UNMIK's authority in several areas, such as public utilities and socially owned property.

Regarding preparations for the general elections, UNMIK is currently in the midst of voter registration, which began on 30 July and will run until 8 September. Voter registration covers four categories: those who chose not to register last year; returnees and other new civil registrants since the municipal elections; registrants from the 2000 municipal elections who need to correct or amend their information, or who need to be reassigned to new, smaller polling stations; and lastly, out-of Kosovo registrants. Voter registration runs

alongside the ongoing civil registration process, in the course of which some 700,000 identity cards have so far been issued to the local population.

As of 24 August, the total number of people within Kosovo processed by voter service centres was 39,265. Of these, 4,937 are from communities which chose not to register last year — mainly Kosovo Serbs. In Serbia proper, a total of 25,351 people have registered, and 494 have registered in Montenegro. In Vienna, the International Organization for Migration has received a total of 27,848 mail-in applications.

Given that we are more than half way through the voter registration period, these figures, particularly for the Kosovo Serb community, are disappointingly low. The institution-building pillar is, subsequently, increasing its public information campaign and drawing on members of municipal election committees and local village leaders to help encourage not only registration, but also participation when the election takes place.

Despite the fact that several Serb leaders have endorsed registration, including Mr. Covic, Mr. Trajkovic and Bishop Artemije of the Serb National Council-Gracanica — the latter two also having registered themselves — the majority of the Kosovo Serb community, both inside and outside Kosovo, seemed to be waiting for an unequivocal signal from Belgrade. Since over the weekend both President Kostunica and Prime Minister Djindjic called on Kosovo Serbs to register, we hope that now Kosovo Serbs will register in greater numbers. With time running out, we call again on the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to fully support the efforts of UNMIK to have as many Kosovo Serbs register as possible, and to encourage them to participate in the elections.

Last month we informed the Council that five Kosovo Serb parties had applied for party certification. It transpires that these parties only submitted partial applications and were requested to provide full details for certification. As of now, none of these five parties has submitted the full certification package. Indeed, some have indicated that they will not do so until there is an agreement to run a unified Democratic Opposition of Serbia (DOS) list in the elections. In order to accommodate eventual certification later, the institution-building pillar has extended the deadline for coalitions to certify for the elections. But again, there is not much time left.

We endorse the message that the Special Representative of the Secretary-General gave to Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Covic, who was recently appointed as head of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia/Serbian joint coordination centre. In that message, given two weeks ago during their first meeting together, the Special Representative underlined the necessity that the Kosovo Serb community buy into the electoral process in order to consolidate the basis for an acceptable security environment and living conditions.

I would like now to touch upon the engagement of Kosovo minority communities and relations with Belgrade. There has been progress in several areas of mutual concern to UNMIK and to the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, primarily on the issue of missing persons and returns. On the missing persons issue, there is now an enhanced programme of visits to grave sites, both in Kosovo and Serbia proper; an exchange of photographic and other information relevant to post-mortem verification work; the composition of a joint consolidated list of missing Kosovo Serbs; and protocols for the repatriation of identified remains. One of the first results achieved by the Contact Group on Detainees and Missing Persons was UNMIK's 15 August return to Yugoslav authorities of the mortal remains of a Kosovo Serb woman.

With regard to returns, there was an initial organized return under a security escort provided by the Kosovo Force (KFOR) on 13 August, of 54 Kosovo Serbs to the Osojane Valley, in the Pec region. That was followed by the return of a further 30 persons on 22 August. The Osojane site is one of the 10 locations identified in 2001 by the action plan of the Joint Committee on Returns for Kosovo Serbs. The return took place without incident, apart from a protest staged by Kosovo Albanians in Istok on 23 August.

The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is providing temporary shelter and basic needs while the returnees reconstruct their houses with the aid of funding from the European Agency for Reconstruction and bilateral donors. In order to aid the reintegration of the Kosovo Serb community in Osojane, additional funding will be channelled to nearby Kosovo Albanian and Roma communities.

By concretely supporting the issues of missing persons and returns, UNMIK is addressing two of the five main concerns that were outlined by President Kostunica during the meeting with the Security Council mission last June. The third one, normalization of the tax-collection mechanism in northern Kosovo, is being settled satisfactorily. The two remaining points raised by President Kostunica are more difficult to address. Cooperation in education and police matters has to be handled carefully so as to take account of legitimate Kosovo Serb interests while, at the same time, safeguarding the integrity of UNMIK's transitional administration.

Relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have generally improved over the past month. An important step forward was made on 15 August with the meeting between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the Commander of KFOR and Mr. Covic. The Special Representative clearly reiterated the need to implement Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) in all of Kosovo, and in particular to ensure that no parallel security and administrative structures are in place, especially in Mitrovica and northern Kosovo. Together with KFOR, and through the UNMIK Belgrade office, the Mission is exploring administrative ways and means to improve working relations with the joint coordination centre. At the meeting, both parties agreed to meet regularly — a commitment that has already materialized with the holding, on 21 August, of a second, very constructive meeting, which took place near Pristina.

(*spoke in French*)

I would now like to take up issues relating to security and law and order.

On 16 August, Mr. Jean-Christian Cady took up his functions as Deputy Special Representative for Police and Justice. Under his leadership, efforts will continue to strengthen law and order, including completing a package of legislation to tackle organized crime. Work has also begun to improve conditions at a witness protection location. In addition, a witness protection director has been appointed. Progress has also been made on creating a specialized office to combat organized crime. That office is scheduled to open on 1 September.

Following a number of politically motivated criminal incidents, the Political Violence Task Force, which was established in the run-up to the 2000 municipal elections, has been reactivated to provide a multi-agency, coordinated response to politically motivated crimes, a response involving all the relevant bodies. The most serious of those incidents in recent days was the attempted assassination of a politician from the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK) in Srbica, in the Mitrovica region.

The Department of Justice is proceeding with the so-called quick-build detention facility, that is, a temporary prison that is quickly set up. In addition to that project, it is also proceeding with the refurbishment of the war-damaged Dubrava prison. The two projects will require six to 12 months properly to complete, as well as an increased number of international staff to manage them. There are two urgent priorities that depend on our ability to recruit staff with the requisite expertise. I am referring to the development of an effective framework for parole and probation services, as well as the provision of qualified staff to address the needs of mentally ill inmates requiring psychiatric services.

Efforts continue to build further the capacity of the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), and to develop an adequate rank system within the KPS. Two senior command courses have now been completed at the Kosovo Police Service School, which is run by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). As a result, a total of 32 senior commanders have now been trained to serve in Kosovo.

I would also like during this briefing to touch upon matters relating to the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Council members are undoubtedly aware of the letters addressed to the Secretary-General from the President, the Foreign Minister and the Prime Minister of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. A copy of the Secretary-General's response to President Trajkovski has been circulated to Council members. As that response indicates, UNMIK and KFOR remain fully committed to countering Albanian extremism and to restoring normal security conditions. UNMIK will continue to support KFOR in its efforts to sever any possible ties that may develop between radical elements in Kosovo and the self-appointed National Liberation Army that operates in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

KFOR is supervising the activities of the Kosovo Protection Corps, known as the KPC. It reports that there is no evidence that the KPC as such has been involved in the recent incidents in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. When individual members of the KPC are found to be involved in criminal activities, they are immediately subject to disciplinary measures, which may include dismissal, and they are liable to criminal prosecution. I believe that yesterday one member of the KPC was subjected to this process.

Since March KFOR has increased its presence at the border of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Albania. It has conducted a Kosovo-wide operation to seize weapons and seek out those suspected of being members of armed groups. In this connection, I have some figures that have been communicated to us by KFOR that I would like to share with you. KFOR reports that since 31 May over 600 individuals have been detained and over 600 rifles, 1,400 grenades, 1,000 anti-tank weapons and 139,000 rounds of ammunition have been seized throughout Kosovo, mainly in the border area. Where KFOR has detained individuals, and where sufficient evidence of criminal activity exists, UNMIK is committed to investigating and prosecuting these cases to the fullest extent of the applicable law in Kosovo.

UNMIK is greatly concerned at the continuing closure of the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, a result of road blockades inside the country. The border closure not only affects the Mission's ability to support its operations in optimum conditions, but it also has negative long-term consequences for the Kosovo economy.

I would like to say a few words about the economy of Kosovo. This border closure is coming at a time when tax collection mechanisms, especially in northern Kosovo, had finally been accepted. Two hundred seventy Kosovo Serbs had applied for the 17 vacancies in the UNMIK tax collection and customs service. This should improve the tax resources collected through UNMIK. Total revenue collected so far by UNMIK passed the 200 million deutsche mark level just before the end of July. This is more than twice the amount of revenue raised in the same period last year, so obviously this means considerable progress has been achieved.

There are ongoing efforts to attract investment to Kosovo and to foster economic activities, in particular through the commercialization of companies. Nine, to date, have undergone this process. As a result of these various measures, there has been a 180 per cent growth in jobs in the industries involved, which is not a negligible amount. Commercialization has engendered extra investment and has also led to progress in the banking sector. The banking and payments authority of Kosovo has approved two new branches for the new Bank of Kosovo. Significant progress is reported in the transport sector as well. In July alone 115,000 passengers were processed by the Pristina airport, contributing as well to Kosovo's revenue collection. The passenger train running between Pristina and Pec is now a regular service. A train tunnel was opened in northern Kosovo, which might in the future make it possible to connect Kosovo with Serbia proper.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the note of cautious optimism sounded during the last briefing to the Council at the end of July has been tempered recently by the figures that I gave you a moment ago regarding the voter registration by Kosovo Serbs. We wish those figures were a lot higher. But it is hoped that the clear signals that have come from Belgrade will help to reverse this currently unsatisfactory trend in terms of pre-election registration. Progress has been made in several areas of mutual concern to all the communities. I am thinking, for instance, of missing persons and returnees.

But we must recognize that it would be unrealistic to expect major developments in a very short time. The situation in Kosovo can only change progressively. Tolerance and respect for others take time. They are not developed overnight. They can come about only through the participation of all in forming Kosovo's future. That is why again we renew our appeal for massive voter registration within the communities concerned and call upon those communities to participate in the elections.

The President *(spoke in Spanish)*: I would like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his comprehensive briefing.

Mr. Hume (United States): I too would like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his detailed briefing on the progress of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in implementing resolution 1244 (1999). We commend the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Hans Haekkerup, for addressing some of the more

complicated issues in the process of establishing provisional interim self-government in Kosovo.

At this time the upcoming elections are the top priority, one that has the full support of my Government. We support UNMIK's efforts to streamline Kosovo's administrative bureaucracy as it transfers authority to a democratically elected government, as outlined in a legal, constitutional framework.

Political changes over the last year have opened the door to UNMIK to strengthen its relations with the Serb community and to reassure Kosovo Serbs about their rightful place in a democratic Kosovo. Kosovo Serbs have begun to register for November's elections.

I would like to second the comments of the Under-Secretary-General in stressing the importance of progress on Serb returns and continued minority interest in Kosovo, as well as their full participation in the elections. The Yugoslav Government has helped encourage this process by expressing in the clearest terms its own support for resolution 1244 (1999). UNMIK should continue its constructive dialogue with Belgrade. We welcome the appointment of Deputy Prime Minister Covic as the new chairman of the coordination centre for Kosovo, and we fully support Special Representative Haekkerup's efforts to build a constructive relationship with Belgrade.

Council members were encouraged by their discussions in Belgrade during their visit there in June. I would like to reiterate my own Government's encouragement to UNMIK to address fully the five priority areas of the Yugoslav Government with regard to Kosovo, which President Kostunica outlined during the June visit. I am also pleased by the progress that has been registered today, as already explained to us.

During the June visit the Council also discussed with Foreign Minister Svilanovic resolution 1160 (1998), and I would like to note my Government's full support for the lifting of the arms embargo at this time.

Public security and the rule of law continue to be at the top of UNMIK's priorities. New regulations on border control, on extremism and on the illegal possession of weapons give UNMIK and KFOR valuable tools for combating violence and preventing its spread beyond Kosovo's borders. We understand that UNMIK has made progress on another series of regulations against organized crime, and we hope they will shortly become law. UNMIK must also continue its efforts to strengthen the judiciary and increase the number of international judges and prosecutors. We applaud the recent appointment of Jean-Christian Cady as the head of the new law and justice pillar, and we look forward to the appointment of a highly qualified individual to head UNMIK's department of judicial affairs. We also applaud KFOR for making full use of these authorities by seizing weapons shipments and detaining individuals who present a threat to peace and order in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as well as in Kosovo. The border interdiction mission should be one of KFOR's and UNMIK's highest priorities. In that regard, NATO's operation "Essential Harvest" will complement KFOR's operations in Kosovo and will address the same problem from the other side of the border.

My Government has worked on numerous fronts to reduce violence in Kosovo. President Bush has issued executive orders to stop individuals in the United States from supporting any violent groups in Kosovo, and to deny entry into the United States of suspected extremists. We have supported more rigorous controls on the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC) and provided assistance to improve the KPC's internal controls. We have encouraged Kosovo's leaders to speak out against violence and to support the Framework Agreement recently signed in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The United States Government will continue to support UNMIK and KFOR in their efforts to fully implement resolution 1244 (1999) and to ensure that democracy and the rule of law are the foundation for Kosovo's future.

Mr. Lavrov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to Mr. Guéhenno for his briefing on the situation in Kosovo and aspects relating to the situation in other parts of the region, particularly in Macedonia.

I would first like to comment on the main part of his briefing, namely, preparations for the elections in Kosovo. This is one of the most important questions, and although some progress has been made in this process leading up to the elections, we must say that on the whole the situation does not encourage optimism.

As is known, in the registration of members of the Serbian and other non-Albanian communities in the province by 17 August, three months before elections are to be held, just over 2,000 people have been

registered among the Serb, Gypsy, Turk and other minorities. Two thousand people in all: this figure speaks for itself.

The reasons for this situation — and this is not the first year we have been talking about them — include the fact that the security problem in Kosovo is not being duly resolved. The return of refugees is not being guaranteed, and the numbers Mr. Guéhenno gave us on organized returns are paltry. Security is not guaranteed, nor is freedom of movement for the minorities in the province. All of this is well known. Unless these conditions are guaranteed, it is hard to talk about any real democratic electoral process.

The conducting of the elections in these conditions in November of this year could lead to an increase in Kosovo separatism. The United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and KFOR must robustly increase their activities in order to resolve the security problem there, the problem of returns and freedom of movement; they must do this well ahead of the elections.

We can say that the main thing is that the Government of Yugoslavia has unambiguously called upon the Kosovo Serbs to participate in the elections. But to expect that this is going to resolve all the problems is naïve, to put it mildly. We note that the United Nations Mission is taking certain steps to establish dialogue with the Government of Yugoslavia. But these steps are obviously not enough.

At the same time, the head of UNMIK is taking other decisions that are creating additional irritation in relations between UNMIK and Belgrade. I am referring in particular to the creation of tax collection posts on the administrative border with Serbia. And I refer to the imposition of the 96-hour notification regime for travel to Kosovo by officials from Yugoslavia. We are troubled that UNMIK has not managed to establish normal relations yet with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia Committee on Kosovo. We share the hopes of many regarding the appointment of Mr. Covic as leader of the coordination centre of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and of Serbia on Kosovo. However, it is clear that this appointment, in and of itself, cannot resolve all the serious problems remaining.

Ultimately, the main guarantee of success is the scrupulous and comprehensive compliance of all with resolution 1244 (1999). This is possible only if there is proper cooperation between UNMIK and Belgrade. I would add that all participants in the process of the settlement must show as much responsibility as possible.

In this connection, the decision taken by the head of the mission of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) does not add any optimism that they are able to certify for participation in the elections the extremist party known as the National Movement of Kosovo. Clearly that is a mistake, and that mistake has to be redressed. Otherwise, we might get the impression that the OSCE was officially recognizing the legitimacy of a structure that represents Albanian extremists, and that the OSCE was actually trying to encourage such structures.

The situation in Kosovo — and this point has been made before by Mr. Guéhenno and Ambassador Hume — cannot be seen in isolation of the situation in the region as a whole. It is clear to all that there is a link between the conflict in Macedonia and the situation in Kosovo, since Kosovo has basically become a rear base for Albanian armed groups in Macedonia. All this sheds stark light on the failure to find a solution to the problem of disarming Kosovo militants and eliminating their illegal armed formations. We are convinced that the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) must take additional robust steps in this area.

We have no doubt that it is still important to halt the spillover of extremists from one part of the region to another and their use of various covers to conceal their terrorist activities. To cite just one example, on 13 August, Russian KFOR troops arrested two Kosovo Albanians in the region of Kosovska Kamenica on the administrative border with Serbia. One of those detained had an automatic weapon, ammunition, a bullet-proof vest and a National Liberation Army (NLA) uniform. He confessed that he was part of the 111th company of the NLA brigade, which had conducted battle activities in Macedonia in the Aracinovo region. This June, he was one of the militants allowed to leave the buses that were being blocked by the Macedonians in the Aracinovo region. Now he had turned up in Kosovo on the administrative border with Serbia with his weapons and his uniform. That is just one example that shows that the problem is still there. It has to be resolved.

We know that during the operation that has just started in Macedonia, the NLA is supposed to be handing over the weapons that its militants possess. Those who are carrying out operation Essential Harvest have to be sure not to repeat the unfortunate experience of Kosovo, in which it was ceremoniously proclaimed that the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) had been disarmed, stripped of its uniforms and disbanded. But in fact, it turned out, of course, that the KLA retained its organizational structures, its weapons, its access to new arms deliveries and its ability to destabilize various parts of the Balkan region.

Talking about Macedonia and about the current operation there, I would add that we are disquieted by information we are receiving about efforts to create in Macedonia another army — an Albanian national army — which is trying to unite under its banner the most militant fighters and to retain a battle-ready core of extremists. That cannot be allowed. We have repeatedly stated that we are in favour of lifting the arms embargo imposed by resolution 1160 (1998) against the Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and we support the appeal by Ambassador Hume to resolve this question as soon as possible. While reaffirming that position, we think it necessary to stress once again also that the international presences in Kosovo will have to take very decisive action to cut off any possible flows of weapons destined for Kosovo Albanian terrorist groups, because the military embargo with regard to these groups must remain in full force.

All this is necessary in order to cut off the channels of financial and material assistance from the territory of Kosovo to extremism, terrorism and separatism in the Balkans. We are convinced that the lasting settlement of the Kosovo Macedonian pockets of tension in the region is possible only in a general Balkan context, and that that goal should be promoted by the implementation of the Russian initiative: to conclude a legally binding agreement to strengthen the security and the sovereignty of all countries of the region, and to that end to convene a Balkan summit, with international participation. We believe that that Russian proposal remains relevant.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): I too would like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his enlightening briefing about developments in Kosovo. My delegation pays tribute to him and to his entire team for their efforts to keep Council members informed about the vicissitudes being encountered by this region and others.

At a time when the international community is closely following developments in the Balkans, and more specifically the general elections that will be held on 17 November 2001 in Kosovo, my delegation welcomes the good conditions in which the preparations for the elections are being carried out. We are also pleased to note the positive and productive attitude adopted by all parties concerned. This attitude guarantees broad participation by all ethnic components of Kosovo and points to the success of the entire electoral operation.

We welcome the decision here taken by Kosovo Serb political parties to participate in the elections. We are convinced that this wise decision, which we have constantly encouraged, will have an important impact on the future of the province, in general, and on the participation of ethnic minorities in the new political structures that will emerge from the elections, in particular. The goal for those new political structures is that they be representative and that they guarantee the right of all inhabitants of Kosovo to safety and security, respect for differences and participation in healthy public life. Clearly, the priority of these new political structures is to banish hatred and attitudes based on ethnic considerations and to promote peaceful coexistence. Broad participation in the electoral process will ensure its success and will give it the necessary legitimacy. We encourage the continuation of contacts by the Kosovo Force (KFOR) leadership with the Belgrade authorities in order to bring about better coordination in the lead up to the elections.

My delegation once again reiterates its disquiet at ongoing acts of violence. We deplore this attitude, whose main victims are civilians. We think that the approach of the elections is creating a climate of tension, for which we need to prepare. Increased vigilance is necessary with a view to addressing any possible violence. In our view, such violence is based on the absence of trust that still prevails among ethnic communities. That trust can be restored, in particular, by eliminating pockets of tension and by strengthening confidence-building measures among the inhabitants of Kosovo. We welcome the signing of the new United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) regulation 2001/17, which is intended to establish rules on the sale of properties in mixed neighbourhoods in order to be sure that transactions

involving minority properties are valid in those multi-ethnic areas, and thus to safeguard the multi-ethnic nature of the province.

The question of refugees and displaced persons remains a major source of concern. We think it is essential to speed up the return of refugees and displaced persons and to guarantee them optimal security conditions, particularly in areas where they are minorities. Once they have gone home, refugees must be able to return to their homes, and their rights must be restored. Furthermore, we believe that as winter approaches, UNMIK should be prepared to give them the best possible living conditions.

It is essential to deal with the question of prisoners and missing persons with due dispatch and preferably before the elections. The search for solutions to the humanitarian aspects of the Kosovo question will go a long way to help promote reconciliation among the various ethnic communities.

My delegation is pleased at the economic progress made in recent months in Kosovo. I saw for myself, during the visit of Security Council members to Kosovo, this new economic spirit, which we encourage and which should be maintained.

Moving from emergency rebuilding to a new phase of economic reform is healthy for Kosovo and the entire Balkan region. We are convinced that the positive impact of these decisions will be felt very quickly.

Mr. Krokhmal (Ukraine): I should like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing, which provided a useful update on the situation in and around Kosovo and the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The first issue on which I would like to focus is the ongoing preparations for the Kosovo-wide elections to be held in November. We are pleased to note some positive developments in that process. However, we recognize that there are a number of challenges ahead.

We strongly believe that the full participation of all communities in the political process is essential to ensure democratic, transparent and fair elections and to regain stability in multi-ethnic Kosovo. In this regard we welcome the continued contacts by the head of the United Nations Interim Administration in Kosovo, Mr. Haekkerup, with Serbian leaders towards encouraging Kosovo Serbs to participate in the province's elections.

Against this background, we are gravely concerned by reports of violent acts of ethnic intolerance that continue to take place in Kosovo. We maintain that these developments are extremely dangerous and destabilize the ongoing efforts towards creating an environment conducive to all-inclusive elections.

Another important challenge is the overall peace process in Kosovo and the creation of safe and secure conditions for the successful and sustainable return to their homes of Kosovo Serbs displaced by the conflict.

The issue of missing people still remains high on the Kosovo agenda as an important aspect of reconciliation.

Among the most recent developments in Kosovo, we were very much disturbed by the report that international peacekeepers patrolling the Kosovo side of the border with Macedonia were attacked by ethnic Albanian rebels who were trying to cross the border illegally. We would be grateful if the Secretariat could give us any information available concerning this incident. Unfortunately, the incident further underscores the regional repercussions of the situation in Kosovo.

We are particularly concerned about the continued insecurity in neighbouring Macedonia. In its recent Presidential Statement welcoming the signing of the Framework Agreement, the Security Council reaffirmed the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Macedonia and expressed its support for the actions of the President and the Government of Macedonia aimed at resolving the crisis. Being a strong supporter of the peaceful political means of settlement in that country, Ukraine remains committed to support the legitimate aspirations of the Republic of Macedonia to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity against those who follow the dangerous path of forceful resolution of the problems. Since the Framework Agreement on the settlement of the crisis was signed, its full implementation remains a priority.

We welcome the efforts made by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union (EU) in assisting the Macedonian Government to ease the situation, and we commend their commitment to support the security, stability and

territorial integrity of the country. Now, with the launching of NATO's disarmament mission operation "Essential Harvest", we very much hope that the security situation there will improve.

In addition to NATO's effort, there are reports that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is contemplating a monitoring role in the peace process in Macedonia. It would be useful to have more information on this matter.

Mr. Eldon (United Kingdom): My delegation would first like to thank Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his briefing. It was, as always, an excellent, useful and helpful briefing, and I would like straight away to reiterate the United Kingdom's support for the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and for the Secretary-General's Special Representative towards peace and stability in Kosovo.

During this short statement I really want to concentrate only on the elections and what has been said about spill-over into Macedonia, not least because the representative of Belgium will be speaking later in the debate on behalf of the European Union and I associate myself with what he has to say.

First, the elections. We very much welcome the support given by the Belgrade authorities for Kosovo Serb registration in advance of the elections for the Kosovo Assembly in November. These elections will mark a correct and important step in returning significant responsibility for self-government to the people of Kosovo. We should also not forget that the elections are a very important opportunity to shape the future of Kosovo.

In order to make it clear that Kosovo must develop as a multi-ethnic community, all ethnic groups must take part in the elections. If they do not, those who support a mono-ethnic independent State will be able to claim, with some justification, that other ethnic groups have no long-term interest in Kosovo. It is therefore vital for the Belgrade authorities to give the earliest possible signal of their support for Kosovo Serbs and others to vote in the elections, not just to register.

Ambassador Lavrov may have been right to say that the clear signals from Belgrade, about both the need to register and the need to vote, may not solve everything. But they are certainly an extremely important element in the equation, and, as far as we are concerned, we strongly urge Belgrade to make its views known and to help in this area.

We welcome also the meetings between Special Representative Haekkerup and Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Covic on 15 and 25 August following Mr. Covic's appointment as chairman of the Yugoslav Coordinating Committee for Kosovo. These meetings, as Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno has said, were very helpful developments. It is also very good news that UNMIK and the Belgrade authorities are now working together positively and quickly to find practical solutions to address declared Serb concerns on security, returns and the missing.

I was particularly grateful to Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for addressing the five points that were raised with the Security Council mission by President Kostunica. As Ambassador Hume has said, I think it is important that we keep on reminding ourselves of those points as key concerns declared by the authorities in Belgrade.

Extremism and ethnically motivated violence have to stop. Small groups of armed Albanians and others should not be allowed to destabilize the region. So we welcome the success of the Kosovo Force in the last few days in arresting Albanian extremists crossing into Kosovo from Macedonia armed with substantial amounts of weaponry and ammunition. It is important that that effort continue.

I also listened carefully to what the Under-Secretary-General had to say about the exchanges of correspondence, to which the Council has been privy, between the Secretary-General and President Trajkovski and other members of the Macedonian Government. It is clearly important that a close and harmonious relationship should be built up between the Secretariat and UNMIK and the Macedonian authorities in order that the concerns of both sides may be fully understood and in order that, when necessary, the appropriate action can be taken to meet those concerns. I know that, as a first step, our Macedonian colleague, who will be speaking later in the debate, will be making every effort to strike up good, close and cordial relations with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations so that we can make sure that things are kept fully on the rails.

Mr. Shen Guofang (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): I wish at the outset to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, for his comprehensive briefing. We appreciate the recent efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) to bring about the comprehensive implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the progress it has made in that regard.

I wish today to address two issues. The first relates to the elections. China has consistently emphasized the importance of participation by minorities in order to ensure the fairness and equity of the elections. But we are concerned that the number of members of minorities who have registered still remains low. UNMIK must take further measures to crack down on criminal activities, to improve the security environment in Kosovo, to promote national reconciliation and to build mutual trust so as to create conditions in which refugees can return and in which more members of minorities can participate in the elections. Here, UNMIK should continue to strengthen coordination and cooperation with the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

The second point relates to illegal arms flows. When it comes to security issues, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia is closely linked to the entire Balkan region. To maintain peace and stability in the region, it is very important to prevent illegal arms flows in border areas between Kosovo and Macedonia and to cut off the sources of supply of illegal weapons. In our view, UNMIK can and should take more effective measures in that regard. Like other countries, we hope that efforts to seize illegal arms that are in the hands of members of the Albanian minority will be successful in order to create conditions favourable for the implementation of the Framework Agreement on Macedonia and to maintain peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): My delegation would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, for his useful briefing this morning. We particularly appreciated his in-depth analysis of the situation in Kosovo.

At the last Council meeting on this item, held on 26 July 2001, we reiterated our call for the continuation and strengthening of the dialogue between the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Council members stressed that the cooperation of Belgrade was essential for the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). In that context, discussions yesterday, in the latest round of such talks, between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haekkerup, and Deputy Prime Minister Covic marked a step in the right direction. We encourage them to continue their efforts at achieving the shared objectives.

One of our main concerns in Kosovo at this point in time is the forthcoming election. During our mission to Kosovo, we stressed the need for participation by all communities with a view to making the election a success. We underlined the importance of support for the democratic process that best guarantees the rights of all communities. The registration of minority communities, so far, has been extremely disappointing. Bangladesh appreciates the appeal made in that regard to the Kosovo Serbs this weekend by President Kostunica. We urge the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to continue to encourage registration for the 17 November elections by Kosovo Serbs and the internally displaced.

I shall make observations on a few specific areas. First is the question of missing persons and detainees. This is a humanitarian issue. It has serious political implications as well. We flagged this humanitarian question during our first mission to Kosovo, last year. We stressed the point again this year in Pristina and in Belgrade. We are pleased that Deputy Prime Minister Covic met representatives of the families of missing persons from Gracanica. Such gestures are crucial in building confidence and in helping reconciliation. We encourage the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haekkerup, and Deputy Prime Minister Covic to continue to work together on the issue with some determination.

The second area concerns the rights of the minority communities — rights, and also responsibilities. We have always stressed that it is important that the majority ensure that the rights of the minority communities are respected. In turn, minority communities too must realize that there is no alternative to establishing a multi-ethnic society. The Kosovo Serb community, in particular, must integrate into the structures being set up by UNMIK rather than attempting to set up parallel structures. In that regard,

we appreciate the understanding being shown by Belgrade on the question of transition institutions.

The initiatives taken by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haekkerup, to protect the rights of minority communities deserve our commendation. We should lend support to the regulation to monitor property sales in mixed neighbourhoods. That is a positive measure aimed at preventing irregular sales of property that would be detrimental to minority rights or to Kosovo's multi-ethnic character.

The third area relates to security and law and order. We reiterate that secure conditions for the elections must be ensured. We earlier recommended the development of a comprehensive strategy to resolve the complex situation in Mitrovica. The emphasis there should be multi-ethnic initiatives in the social, economic and religious areas that would facilitate rebuilding confidence among communities. We hope that progress has been made in that regard.

It is in the interest of Kosovo to facilitate the participation of all communities in the elections, as well as the return of refugees and displaced persons.

Fourthly, as regards the role of civil society, as we underscored during the Council's last meeting on this item, civil society, including Kosovo women's organizations, are engaged in reaching across the ethnic divide, in building confidence, in helping with reconciliation and in fostering greater tolerance. This is well recognized. Such organizations should receive the support of UNMIK and the encouragement of the international community.

I shall conclude by underlining that all Kosovars, irrespective of their ethnic background, should accept the framework established under resolution 1244 (1999) and should contribute to the full implementation of that resolution. To that end, representation of different communities in the interim institutions is essential. Therefore the holding of successful elections in Kosovo is the most important challenge facing UNMIK and, if I may say so, the international community. It is the most important undertaking for the people of Kosovo. It will be an important step forward for lasting peace in the Balkans.

Mr. Doutriaux (France) (*spoke in French*): France associates itself with the position that will be stated by Ambassador De Ruyt on behalf of the European Union. I would just like to make several comments from our national perspective. First, we thank Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno for the briefing he has just given. I would like to focus on two issues: the elections and security.

As regards the elections, we are 90 days away from election day. The election stems from the Constitutional Framework promulgated by Mr. Haekkerup. It is thus a new and important stage in the implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). We are gratified by the efforts of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). These two organizations are doing their best to make the elections a success and to ensure that the transfer of power to the institutions of provisional self-government takes place in an orderly fashion.

But as the date draws near, the commitment of all the inhabitants of Kosovo, whatever their ethnic origin may be, is indispensable. All the parties concerned have responsibilities in that connection. As regards the registration of members of the Kosovo Serb community, momentum has developed; we hope that it will accelerate in the coming days and weeks, and that the Serb community will decide to participate in the vote.

By voting on 17 November every Kosovar citizen will make his or her voice heard. Every vote counts, every vote has weight. To influence the decisions of the future autonomous institutions and to promote respect for their own interests all electors should participate in selecting their representatives in a democratic manner. We wish to echo Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno's appeal to all ethnic communities to participate, including, of course, the Serb community.

We also salute the appointment of the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, Mr. Covic, as head of the Serb coordination centre for Kosovo. That has been followed in recent weeks by talks between Mr. Covic and Mr. Haekkerup. These meetings are a very positive development. We encourage the intensification of the dialogue.

Secondly, as regards security issues, we are gratified that UNMIK is promulgating a series of regulations to combat terrorism and organized crime in Kosovo. The new police and justice pillar of the United Nations Mission will promote the smooth implementation of those measures. We must make sure

that the regulations in force leave no weak spots that could be exploited by criminals.

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) too must remain vigilant. We are gratified that its troops along the border with Macedonia have recently been reinforced. The situation in Macedonia requires that increased attention be paid to illegal activities along the Kosovo border. In that regard, we read with interest the Secretary-General's reply to the President of the Republic of Macedonia on this issue, among others.

The European Union has become deeply engaged in the search for a political solution in Macedonia. Mr. Solana, the High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy and the Special Representative of the European Union in Macedonia, Mr. François Léotard, have been vigorously engaged in the field, along with Mr. James Pardew, to facilitate dialogue among the parties. This contributed to the signing by the Macedonian factions in Skopje of the 13 August agreement which provides a foundation for a thorough reform of the Macedonian State.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization is now engaged in collecting the arms that the National Liberation Army of Macedonia has agreed to turn over. Five hundred and thirty French soldiers are participating in this operation, which springs from the goodwill of the parties. France is also supporting European Union efforts to achieve lasting stability in Macedonia, in particular through a donor conference and strengthened humanitarian and macro-economic aid.

Finally, I would like to return to the issue of resolution 1160 (1998). In harmony with what Russia and the United States have already stated, France, too, feels that the conditions have now been met for the unrestricted lifting of the arms embargo on Yugoslavia. We hope that the Council will take up the lifting of the embargo as soon as possible.

Mr. Ward (Jamaica): I thank the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Guéhenno, for briefing the Council on the latest developments in Kosovo. There has been steady progress on the development of a multi-ethnic society in Kosovo, but there remains much to be done. That is quite evident from reports of violence in the territory. Violence against minorities continues to plague the territory and to impede the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

We recognize that these, usually isolated, incidents are concentrated in a few areas, and that UNMIK continues to put structures in place to provide for the maintenance of law and order. We must recognize, however, that incidents of violence overshadow the enormous progress that has been made so far.

My delegation condemns what has been described as the ghastly and horrific killing of five members of a Kosovo Albanian family on 21 August. Early in the month of August, a Serb convoy was ambushed and three people were injured. Destabilizing incidents like these must not be allowed to continue.

We would like to see the judicial system equipped to deal with incidents such as these in an appropriate and proportionate manner. UNMIK must increase its effort to recruit a greater number of Serb judges, prosecutors and lawyers in order to build a multi-ethnic judicial system that will enjoy the support of all ethnic groups. UNMIK must continue to seek ways to control inter-ethnic violence as preparations continue for the elections in November.

In our last statement on Kosovo in the Council we mentioned the issue of property sales as an essential component in ensuring the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups in Kosovo. We were concerned about indications that the sale of minority housing may have been used as a guise for ethnic cleansing. We therefore welcome the recent signing of a new UNMIK regulation to ensure that all proposed contracts for property sales in certain mixed neighbourhoods in Kosovo are thoroughly reviewed by a municipal administrator before being approved.

With regard to relations with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, my delegation is encouraged by the talks held between the Serbian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Covic, and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haekkerup. We have maintained that only through dialogue can obstacles to the improvement of relations with Serbia and to the advancement of reconciliation in Kosovo be overcome. Such talks are important to the process of preparing for elections in November, as the discussions are important elements of Serb participation and the removal of parallel security and administrative structures. We encourage more frequent talks aimed at ensuring the full implementation of resolution 1244 (1999). We also

welcome the support of the Kosovo Transitional Council for those talks.

We continue to monitor the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and its impact on the situation in Kosovo, and vice versa. The impact on the refugee situation remains of concern, and we note that the return of Macedonian refugees directly corresponds to periods of relative calm in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. We note also that the border crossing between that country and Kosovo remains blocked, preventing essential supplies such as fuel from entering Kosovo and resulting in the rationing of fuel there. Reports indicate that the closure of the border between the territories has also impeded rotations of United Nations police. It may also possibly affect the shipment of medical supplies. It would be instructive if Mr. Guéhenno could comment on whether those restrictions on United Nations police have adversely affected the security situation. Jamaica supports efforts aimed at a speedy resolution of the conflict in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, for the sake of the people of that country and for the sake of stability in Kosovo and throughout the region.

We are encouraged by the recent return of a number of Serb refugees to the village of Osojane. We hope that we will soon see a situation where, having returned, those Serbs will enjoy freedom of movement, safety and security.

We commend UNMIK for its work. We are aware of the difficulties it faces in carrying out its duties. It is clear that there are serious problems that UNMIK must address. It is our hope that significant progress can be made prior to the elections in November.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): I too would like to join my colleagues in thanking the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, for his comprehensive briefing.

We want to begin with a confession. I think that this is the eighth time we have discussed the situation in Kosovo since Singapore joined the Council, and it is very difficult for us to find something new to say. But, for the record, we want to reiterate the points we have made in the past on this issue.

There is, however, one new dimension as we meet today. As several speakers have pointed out, that dimension is the developments in Macedonia. Everyone, I think, has said that developments in Macedonia are linked to developments in Kosovo. This is clearly a variable of uncertainty that we have. We thought it would be useful to raise some questions in this area that, we hope, someone may be able to answer — although I will confess to Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno that these may be difficult questions for him to answer.

I have taken note of the fact that the Council issued a presidential statement on 13 August, two weeks ago, welcoming the signing of the Framework Agreement in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia by President Trajkovski and the leaders of the four political parties. But my understanding is — that is, to the best of my knowledge even though I was not here at the time — that there was no substantive discussion of that issue. It may be useful to have a substantive discussion of it. I will illustrate this by reading a few paragraphs from a recent op-ed piece written by Gareth Evans on that agreement.

But before doing so, I would just like to raise a small, procedural matter. I was reading the Framework Agreement and noticed that the first sentence says that

> "The following points comprise an agreed framework for securing the future of Macedonia's democracy and permitting the development of closer and more integrated relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the Euro-Atlantic community".

I am somewhat intrigued by the phrase "Euro-Atlantic community". Is this a new organization? Does it have an address? Does it have a legal structure? Or is it a general political body? I am just sort of curious as to the origin of that phrase.

But, turning to the agreement, let me just read what was said by Mr. Gareth Evans, the President of the International Crisis Group.

> "Macedonia's peace agreement is signed and within a few days, barring further hitches, 3,500 North Atlantic Treaty Organization [NATO] troops will be on the ground to collect the ethnic Albanian rebels' weapons. But no one who cares about the future of the Balkans is breaking out the champagne. Too many on both sides of the divide are only too keen to continue the struggle, and the NATO mission, as presently constructed, has neither the mandate nor the

capacity to create sustainable peace. This is Macedonia 2001, but it looks unnervingly like Bosnia 1992.

"More is at stake here than the breakup of a small, impoverished country, and all the human misery that could go with it. Collapse in Macedonia would likely delay achievement of a stable, multi-ethnic Bosnia; damage prospects for peacefully negotiating Kosovo's final status; jeopardize Serbia's democratic transition; and significantly damage NATO's credibility in Europe and beyond." (*The Wall Street Journal, 22 August 2001, p. A16*)

Clearly, we therefore have some fairly hard questions to raise about the Agreement and the impact it is going to have on the situation in Kosovo. Four questions came to my mind while reading it.

The first question is, having participated in at least eight discussions on Kosovo, could we in the Council in any way have anticipated this dimension of the problem? As that dimension has clearly had a significant impact on the situation in Kosovo in all our discussions, why did we not anticipate it? It is an interesting question for the Council to ask because, from time to time, we issue statements and calls and declarations saying that we should engage in prevention of armed conflict. Why did we not succeed in this case?

Of course, the second, related, question is, what form of preventive action could the Council have taken if it had indeed paid attention to all the signals coming through indicating that trouble was brewing on the border and that it would spill over into Kosovo?

The third question — and here I note of course that the Council has welcomed NATO involvement in Macedonia, which I frankly believe we should all welcome — may perhaps be a theoretical, legal question. Does the Council in any way need to legitimize such action? Or is it our role just to take note of it and welcome it without in any way either endorsing it or rejecting it? What is the technical role of the Council when regional organizations take a leadership role on such difficult issues?

I also have a fourth question, which is perhaps the most difficult. I think that, if all goes well and the Agreement works and operation Essential Harvest succeeds, we should commend NATO and welcome the fact that a very dangerous situation has been prevented. But if it does not work, who will pick up the pieces? Will it be the Council that will have to pick up the pieces and say, "Okay, it is now our responsibility to look at the situation and see what we can do about it"? If that is the case, how do we arrange for the passing of the baton, and for who does it and when?

I realize that these are not easy questions. I am not so sure whether it is fair to ask the Under-Secretary-General to answer them. But we think that these are the sorts of questions that the Council certainly should have been considering during the past few months, perhaps in an attempt to prevent from happening the situation that we see today on the border between Kosovo and Macedonia.

Mr. Koonjul (Mauritius): We are grateful to the Under-Secretary-General, Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, for his very comprehensive and useful briefing this morning. We have noted the progress made by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in preparations for the elections in Kosovo and in finalizing the institutions of provisional self-government.

However, we are concerned about the security situation, in particular about reports that several Kosovo Force (KFOR) and UNMIK police members were recently injured during riots following a car accident in the north of Mitrovica. Such attacks on United Nations personnel are serious, and they hamper the work of those people who are dedicated to bringing peace to the province. The population of Kosovo must be made to understand that taking out their frustration on KFOR and United Nations personnel will not help solve their problem. The political leaders must do everything possible to convince their partisans not to resort to violence. We also deplore the murder of five members of a Kosovo Albanian family near Pristina on 20 August 2001 and the attack on a Serb convoy, which left three persons injured at the beginning of the month. These violent acts negatively impact on the creation of a safe environment for displaced persons and refugees to return to Kosovo and undermine efforts to bring peace and stability to the region. We equally deplore attempts at political assassinations, as well as continuing organized crime activities. We support UNMIK efforts at curbing such acts, while stressing that it is the responsibility of the Kosovars themselves to create conditions conducive to a multi-ethnic Kosovo.

With a large number of refugees in the province and with the closure of the border at Blace, the work of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo is being considerably hampered. We call on the Government of Macedonia to make arrangements for the re-opening of the route for easy access of supplies to United Nations personnel in Kosovo and for the return of refugees in Macedonia. We have noted KFOR's seizure of weapons, such as pistols, grenades, ammunition and anti-personnel landmines. My delegation encourages KFOR in its operations to cut down the supply lines of the extremists. We also call on all those who have contact with the extremists to persuade them to cease violence and to participate in the UNMIK process to build and guarantee an autonomous, safe and peaceful Kosovo.

The talks between Mr. Hans Haekkerup and the Serbian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Covic, on 15 August have reassured us of the support of the Serbian side for the principle that there should be no security and administrative structures parallel to those administered by UNMIK. We also welcome the positive attitude of Belgrade regarding the registration of Serb community voters for the forthcoming Kosovo-wide elections. It is crucial that all communities register to be counted as residents of Kosovo and have a chance to vote and be represented in the Kosovo Assembly. We support the need for an enhanced public campaign to encourage voter registration and the eventual participation of the Kosovars in the election on 17 November.

We also note that the issue of Kosovo Albanian detainees in Serbian prisons was discussed during the meeting. We hope that the Serbian authorities will soon hand over those detained to UNMIK so that these cases can be reviewed as appropriate by UNMIK. These measures should help build confidence between the communities. With the collaboration of the Serbian Ministry of Justice, UNMIK should be able to further improve the judicial process and enhance the trust of the people in the judicial system of Kosovo.

My delegation encourages the Serbian authorities to continue dialogue and cooperation with UNMIK on the security arrangements in anticipation of the November elections. Such cooperation is essential to ensuring the wide and safe participation of all the communities in the elections, which should hopefully lead to a multi-ethnic Government and should contribute to lasting peace in the region.

Mr. Corr (Ireland): My delegation too very much appreciates today's briefing from the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, and the opportunity provided by this meeting to review recent developments, particularly in the light of the forthcoming Kosovo-wide elections.

The Permanent Representative of Belgium will later deliver a statement on behalf of the European Union. As Ireland subscribes fully to the views expressed therein, I will limit myself to a few brief comments, especially in the context of the election and security.

Mr. Guéhenno's briefing shows that preparations for the elections are proceeding at pace. My delegation commends the hard work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Haekkerup, and of everyone else involved in the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) in that regard and in implementing other aspects of resolution 1244 (1999). The elections on 17 November clearly represent a unique opportunity for the people of Kosovo, and, along with others here today, we very much urge all citizens to participate fully in the political process. As has been said before in the Council, all communities must realize that the only possible future for Kosovo is as a multi-ethnic society based on respect for minority rights and human rights. The Kosovar Albanians must respect the rights of minorities, and those minorities accept, in that context, the challenge of participation.

We note with satisfaction the support of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for the registration of Serbs in Kosovo. We welcome efforts undertaken by the Serb parties in that regard, and we hope that the difficulties over certification that we have heard will be resolved soon. The number of Kosovo Serbs that have registered to vote is, as has been said, disappointing. Ireland very much hopes that they will register in larger numbers and urges them to do so, and we urge their leaders to continue to show full support for such participation. Kosovar parties and civic leaders must do everything possible to encourage a positive climate for Serb participation. As part of such a climate, terrorist activity must cease, and all ethnic Albanian representatives must clearly distance themselves from violence. Further early and quantifiable progress in the security area must also be achieved.

In that regard, my delegation welcomes, as others have today, the recent detention by KFOR of a number of suspected terrorists trying to cross illegally into Kosovo. We also welcome the establishment of the police and justice pillar and the information provided today by the Under-Secretary-General about detention facilities, witness protection programmes, and so on.

Ireland welcomes the intensification of relations between UNMIK and Belgrade and, in particular, the recent progress achieved regarding missing persons. Further cooperation by Serbs and by ethnic Albanians on this extremely sensitive issue will help to create a favourable climate for change. We appreciate the information given by Mr. Guéhenno about developments relating to the points raised by President Kostunica during the Security Council mission's visit to the region in June, and we hope that further progress can be achieved. We believe that UNMIK should liaise ever more closely with the administration in Belgrade, including in relation to refugee returns, and we hope that further meetings, such as those recently held between Mr. Haekkerup and Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Covic, will be held. Ireland hopes that, in order to facilitate such liaison, the guidelines for the entry of officials from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia into Kosovo will be used pragmatically and flexibly.

The Council has already issued a presidential statement, which welcomed the signing of the Framework Agreement in Skopje on 13 August. We hope that the Agreement will prove to be the basis for a stable political settlement. Ireland urges the parties to implement all aspects of the agreement in good faith and to honour all of their commitments. We call on KFOR to continue its efforts to further strengthen controls along the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and to contain cross-border activities by extremist groups.

Mr. Strømmen (Norway): I would like to thank the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Mr. Guéhenno, for his briefing, and to reiterate Norway's support for the efforts of United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to implement Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) and the Constitutional Framework for Kosovo.

We are pleased to note that some progress has been achieved, including in the areas of confidence-building for minorities and of the small-scale return of refugees. We welcome the successful return of a first group of Kosovo Serbs in the municipality of Istok. We look forward to the implementation of further returns. However, much more remains to be done.

My Government is concerned about the low level of voter registration among Kosovo Serbs. Intensified efforts are clearly needed by all parties involved to achieve elections that are perceived as legitimate and representative for all communities in Kosovo.

We welcome recent statements by Yugoslav and Serb leaders encouraging Kosovo Serbs to register as voters in the November provincial elections. For its part, the international community should facilitate this progress by refraining from measures and actions that unduly impinge upon Belgrade's authority and influence among Kosovo Serbs. Convincing the Kosovo Serbs and other minorities of the advantages of voter registration seems hard enough. Convincing them that they have something to gain from participating in elections is even harder. The effort must be made. We welcome the ongoing discussion on post-election structures and talks, including consultations with representatives of all ethnic communities.

The democratic authorities in Belgrade are working systematically and with determination to settle the accounts of the country's near past and bring Yugoslavia back to normal international cooperation. The extradition of Mr. Milosevic to The Hague is an important step. Serbian authorities are pursuing investigations of cases of suspected war crimes against civilians in Kosovo. Serbian perpetrators are being prosecuted. The engagement of Serbian Deputy Prime Minister Covic as Yugoslav coordinator for Kosovo is encouraging. We believe that UNMIK should avail itself fully of this opportunity for constructive and practical cooperation with the authorities in Belgrade.

The international community should acknowledge that Yugoslavia has truly entered a post-Milosevic era. Increased cooperation with the democratic forces in Belgrade will not only improve the possibilities for implementing resolution 1244 (1999) in a sustainable manner in Kosovo, but also contribute to the consolidation of the authorities in Belgrade against less reform-oriented circles of Serbia. The way in which resolution 1244 (1999) is implemented will have clear implications for the whole region. Norway welcomes the Framework Agreement signed on 13 August by

President Trajkovski and the heads of the four main political parties in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The Agreement represents a vital first step in creating conditions for peace and stability in that country. The international community must stand united in giving firm and clear support to the Framework Agreement.

We express our full support for the engagement of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in this process. Operation Essential Harvest is a prerequisite for successful implementation of the agreement. It is essential that the ceasefire be observed. Norway strongly condemns all acts of political violence. Such acts can only jeopardize the continuation of the political process.

It is also important to recognize that confidence and trust between the Albanian and Slav communities in Macedonia is almost non-existent. Considerable efforts must be made to address this situation. The onus for action rests primarily with Macedonian authorities and political leaders from the Albanian and Slav Macedonian communities. However, the international community can and should be supportive.

Lastly, I would like to underline the merits of maintaining a regional perspective in the Security Council dealings with Kosovo rather than a Kosovo perspective on dealing with the Balkans. This implies that we must carefully consider the potential impact that the arrangements for Kosovo might have on neighbouring States and on regional stability.

Mr. Touré (Mali) (*spoke in French*): I, too, wish to join previous speakers in thanking Under-Secretary-General Mr. Jean-Marie Guéhenno, for the very full update about the activities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

Despite the complex and many difficulties facing UNMIK in implementing Council resolution 1244 (1999), we must recognize that outstanding progress has been made in establishing democratic and multi-ethnic institutions in Kosovo. My statement will cover a number of main points.

Regarding the political situation, on 26 July, my delegation expressed firm support for Mr. Haekkerup and the whole UNMIK team for having promulgated the Constitutional Framework for provisional self-government in Kosovo and for having announced the date of elections. On that same day, we said we agreed that the Constitutional Framework and the announcement of the date of elections were definitely decisive steps towards a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo. Today, we note with great interest that notable progress has been made in the preparations for the elections to be held on 17 November.

Because those elections are an essential framework to combat intransigent extremism and ethnic intolerance, my delegation encourages all the people of Kosovo to participate in them in large numbers. We believe that the unreserved participation of all communities is crucial to the success of the elections. That is why my delegation will give unstinting support to UNMIK initiatives to draw up inclusive electoral rolls conducive to the free participation of all ethnic groups in the electoral process.

Participation by all communities, in particular by the Serbian minority, is a major concern for my delegation. Efforts taken by UNMIK, the Kosovo Force (KFOR) and the international community to encourage Serb political figures to join the ongoing democratic process in Kosovo are to be welcomed and encouraged. We welcome the positive attitude adopted by Belgrade towards the registration of voters for the upcoming elections, particularly the registration of Serbs. In order to encourage this process, adequate security measures should be taken to encourage all refugees, in particular, those from the Serb minority, to return home and participate actively in the elections, and to build a multi-ethnic democratic society in Kosovo.

Turning to the Constitutional Framework, it should be stressed that its implementation is of crucial importance to my delegation, because it will enable the people of Kosovo to administer their daily lives by encouraging the moderates to advance the political process, while marginalizing the extremists. That is why my delegation reiterates its appeal to all of the inhabitants of Kosovo to participate actively in the structures that have been set in place and in the future Government of the territory.

Turning to security issues, my delegation remains concerned at the persistence of ethnic and political violence and of organized crime in Kosovo. The 21 August 2001 murder of five members of the Hajra family near Glogovac was eloquent evidence of this mindless violence. There is no doubt that this violence against the minorities of the province is the greatest

obstacle to the establishment of peace, democracy and prosperity by the international community in Kosovo. We strongly condemn this mindless violence, which, unfortunately, is also the biggest obstacle to the return of refugees and displaced persons.

The establishment by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General of pillar I and the enactment of laws that punish organized crime, illegal arms possession and terrorism are useful measures, which have considerably improved the security conditions in Kosovo.

Because they have proved to be effective, my delegation also supports the specific steps taken by UNMIK and KFOR to monitor the administrative borders of Kosovo, in particular the border with the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. All useful steps should be taken to prevent Kosovo from becoming a rear base for Albanian rebels of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). We encourage the Macedonian authorities and KLA leaders to comply strictly with their commitments undertaken under the auspices of the European Union. We hope that, after the weapons are collected, the international community will do everything possible to create the best possible conditions for lasting peace to be established in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Turning now to the economy, in order to put an end to the disastrous state of the economy and the resulting high unemployment in Kosovo, the adjustment measures taken by UNMIK should be encouraged and continued. Convinced that economic development is a major element in bringing about stabilization, my delegation recommends the mobilization by the international community of additional funding for economic recovery programmes at the village level.

Furthermore, the question of missing persons and detainees — which remains one of the main obstacles to reconciliation — is a major concern of my delegation. We support the United Nations Mission in Kosovo and the parties concerned in implementing decisions taken with regard to this fundamental question.

Finally, my delegation, while recognizing the magnitude of the job to be done by UNMIK, pays tribute to Mr. Hans Haekkerup for his leadership of UNMIK and to the entire local and international staff of UNMIK and KFOR for their determination and commitment to implement resolution 1244 (1999). The international community should continue to support UNMIK at this crucial stage of its commitment to Kosovo in order to attain peace, security and sustainable development.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as representative of Colombia.

I wish to start by thanking Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno for his comprehensive presentation on recent events in Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. With regard to what he said, in the first place we support the constructive dialogue held between Mr. Haekkerup and the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia, Mr. Covic.

As we have pointed out on different occasions, the success of the political process of implementing the Constitutional Framework, and of Kosovo's future in general, depends on cooperative relations with Belgrade. This is why we are gratified to hear that the degree of understanding between the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Yugoslav Government is constantly improving, and we hope this will contribute to the search for solutions to matters such as security, missing and detained persons, and the return of refugees.

As for electoral participation, the low figures only 10 days before the closing of the rolls are alarming. We would all like the recent appeal made by the Belgrade authorities to stimulate the Serb Kosovo population to be heeded. These comments should be made repeatedly and even more emphatically in the days to come.

In this connection, we would like Mr. Guéhenno to give us additional information about the voter registration process, in particular as regards what is being done to register displaced persons and refugees as well as what has been done thus far to stimulate participation in these categories.

Another interesting topic is the situation in prisons. Last month, Mr. Guéhenno mentioned the material conditions in prisons as a result of the number of persons being arrested on a daily basis as compared to the capacity of penal institutions. We would like to know what UNMIK is doing to cope with this situation and whether, in his opinion, there is anything the

Council could do to prevent the problem from spinning out of control.

The last element we would like to highlight concerns the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in relation to Kosovo. The Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has sent several letters to the Secretary-General making serious accusations about the work being carried out by UNMIK and KFOR to put an end to assistance being provided to the National Liberation Army.

We would like to know what specific actions are being carried out jointly by UNMIK and KFOR to investigate thoroughly the accusations and allegations against members of the Kosovo Protection Corps. The international community must not allow all the achievements made in Kosovo through the work of UNMIK and KFOR to be jeopardized by these facts. That is why concrete acts must be employed to respond to these allegations.

Finally, in connection with what has been said about sanctions, it is clear that the Council must be prepared to consider without delay lifting the sanctions. In my opinion, this is the best way to recognize the fact that the sanctions must end as soon as the circumstances that justified their imposition have ceased to exist.

I shall now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The next speaker on my list is the representative of Belgium. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. De Ruyt (Belgium) *(spoke in French)*: I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, and the European Free Trade Association countries that are members of the European Economic Area, Iceland and Liechtenstein, align themselves with this statement.

Each meeting of the Security Council brings us closer to the crucial deadline of the elections in Kosovo next November. We welcome the regularity of these open debates, which give us the opportunity to take stock of current and future developments in the region. In this connection, I should like to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his excellent briefing. This meeting also gives me an opportunity to confirm once again the European Union's support for the efforts made by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and by the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Hans Haekkerup, to implement resolution 1244 (1999).

We attach particular importance to recent developments in Kosovo because they are decisive steps towards a democratic and multi-ethnic Kosovo. We have warmly welcomed the publication of the Constitutional Framework for Provisional Self-Government. Now, for it to become a reality, it is essential that all the communities participate in the elections next November as well as in the Kosovo transitional institutions that will emerge from the elections.

In this connection, we welcome the support offered by Belgrade for the registration of the Serbian electors in Kosovo. We are also glad that several political parties have already registered for the ballot. We hope that the parties which have begun the procedure — the Serb parties in particular — will carry it to conclusion so that all the communities are represented on the electoral rolls. The Union notes with satisfaction that the process is moving forward, but, as Mr. Guéhenno has just pointed out, more progress is needed. We hope that Belgrade will actively encourage the Serb community to participate in the elections. The European Union is indeed convinced that all communities should take part in the elections in order to ensure a multi-ethnic future for Kosovo.

In general, relations between Belgrade and UNMIK have developed very positively over the last few weeks. We have often expressed how important we consider these relations to be, and we welcome the fact that Deputy Prime Minister Covic and Mr. Haekkerup are meeting now, and we hope that that collaboration will intensify in the future.

The European Union is well aware of the problems that persist in Kosovo, particularly as regards security, missing persons and the return of refugees and displaced persons, as well as regarding organized crime. In this respect, we are taking the concerns of the various communities very seriously. We welcome the measures or initiatives already taken, and we encourage UNMIK and the other players involved to continue their efforts in these areas.

An encouraging sign for the whole region was sent to us by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia with the signing of the Framework Agreement by President Trajkovski and the leaders of the four major political parties. We hope that Parliament will consider it with attention with the aim of approving it as soon as possible. The Union urges all the parties faithfully to abide by the agreement and to take all the measures needed for its speedy and full implementation. It is essential that everyone observe the ceasefire scrupulously from now on. The success of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization operation "Essential Harvest", as well as the whole peace process, depends on this. We remain confident, despite the uncertainty of the situation.

In this context, the frontier between Kosovo and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia remains extremely sensitive, as others have noted this morning. We encourage the Kosovo Force to continue to devote the greatest attention to it.

The European Union will pursue its efforts to promote stability, democratic development and prosperity in the region, in close collaboration with all the parties. In following up on the commitments entered into at the Zagreb summit, the countries of the region have made encouraging progress along the path of democracy, peaceful coexistence and regional cooperation. We are certain that these efforts will ensure peace and stability for all the communities of the region.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): The next speaker is the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. I invite him to make his statement.

Mr. Sahovic (Federal Republic of Yugoslavia): Before I address the issues that are the subject of our debate today, let me express my satisfaction at seeing you, Sir, presiding over the Security Council deliberations for this month. I also take this opportunity to thank Mr. Guéhenno for his, as usual, very interesting and in-depth briefing and analysis.

We are all aware of the important and sensitive political phase that is quickly approaching, since there are just two and a half months before the scheduled elections in Kosovo and Metohija on 17 November. A number of issues deserve our collective attention and were mentioned in the briefing we just received and in subsequent statements by the members of the Council and other colleagues. So allow me, therefore, to make a few comments.

First and foremost, since our last debate here my Government has intensified its efforts to promote direct and prompt communication with the international presence in Kosovo and Metohija. With this in mind, the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the Republic of Serbia have established a coordinating centre for Kosovo and Metohija, headed by Mr. Nebojsa Covic, the Deputy Prime Minister of Serbia. The Centre's primary goal is to enhance cooperation with the international community in solving the common problems and achieving the shared aims of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in the province. It is hoped that this will also help to improve the confidence of Kosovo Serbs in UNMIK and KFOR.

The results of the efforts are already visible. Important meetings have been held between Mr. Haekkerup and Mr. Covic to discuss a number of outstanding issues. Indeed, as Mr. Guéhenno stated, some progress has already been made, and we certainly hope for more.

Also with the objective of facilitating communication and solving practical problems, just a few days ago my Government adopted guidelines for the transport of KFOR personnel and equipment through Yugoslav territory. This is, of course, in our opinion a temporary measure, pending the conclusion of the status of forces agreement and the status of mission agreement, in accordance with the established United Nations practice for similar missions.

Unfortunately, in spite of all these efforts unnecessary misunderstandings and incidents continue to occur, such as the one that took place on 7 August on the Federal Government premises at Gracanica. Another step in the wrong direction was the introduction of the guidelines of the Special Representative providing for 96-hour notice by any Yugoslav or Serbian official who wants to visit Kosovo and Metohija. This measure will certainly not facilitate our efforts to encourage the non-Albanian population to register for the elections. If anything, it will discourage them.

I want to reiterate that these misunderstandings are really unnecessary, and I hope that we can avoid their occurrence in the future through our mutual

contacts here, through the UNMIK office in Belgrade and, of course, through the contacts between Mr. Haekkerup and Mr. Covic.

Speaking of registration, as has already been mentioned here today, the highest Yugoslav and Serbian officials have repeatedly called on the Kosovo Serbs to register. Also, the Serbian Commissariat for Refugees and Displaced Persons has signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Organization for Migration enabling registration outside of Kosovo and Metohija, with the participation of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. So far, however, the response of potential voters has not been enthusiastic, to say the least.

The reasons are many, I think. It is clear that the basic preconditions for free and fair elections have not yet been created and that UNMIK has to do much more to ensure safety and liberty for all in Kosovo and Metohija, regardless of ethnicity. Continued violent attacks by armed Albanian extremists and terrorists — not only against non-Albanians, but also against Albanians and even UNMIK and KFOR personnel — provide telling evidence that a proper atmosphere that would allow important decisions to be taken regarding the future of this southern Serbian province has not as yet been created.

In this context, it is also important to note the recent independent reports that shed some light on the overall human rights and law and order situation in Kosovo and Metohija, especially the reports of the ombudsperson for Kosovo. These reports identify a number of instances of clear incompatibility between UNMIK regulations and practices and recognized international standards. We are of the view that these findings should be carefully analysed and that urgent action should be taken to rectify the situation.

I am grateful to the Council members for expressing readiness to lift the arms embargo that was instituted by resolution 1160 (1998). This would be a very important step in normalizing our relations with the international community.

Allow me also to use this occasion to bring to the Council's attention the situation in the ground safety zone in southern Serbia. So far the plan — which has been supported by the Council — for the peaceful resolution of the crisis in this area has been implemented successfully. The training of a multi-ethnic police force is well under way. In addition, the Yugoslav army and KFOR have concluded an agreement providing for the full control of the zone by the Yugoslav army and enhanced cooperation between the army and the international security presence in Kosovo and Metohija.

Finally, regarding the other issue of concern for the region — an issue which is also closely related to the situation in Kosovo and Metohija — let me reiterate Yugoslavia's strong support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Macedonia. In the past weeks and months Macedonia has been on the brink of war due to unacceptable terrorist activities of armed ethnic Albanian groups, often supported and supplied from Kosovo and Metohija. The recently signed Framework Agreement, which Yugoslavia supports, and the deployment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization contingent to carry out the disarmament of armed ethnic groups raise hopes that the existing problems will be resolved through the reforms and processes agreed upon by the political factions in the country.

We continue to firmly believe that the use of violence and terrorism in pursuit of political goals must not be allowed. For their part, UNMIK and KFOR have clear responsibility to prevent any future actions to destabilize Macedonia emanating from the area under their control and administration.

In conclusion, let me once again emphasize that we rely on the Security Council to ensure the full implementation of its resolution 1244 (1999), to which the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia is committed. We also think that it is high time for the region — supported by the international community, including the Security Council — to intensify discussions on how to embark on the road towards lasting stability in our part of the world.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kerim (the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia): Thank you, Sir, for giving me the opportunity to address the Security Council. At the same time, I would like to express my appreciation for

the introductory remarks and evaluations made by Under-Secretary-General Guéhenno. Allow me also to join those who associated themselves with the statement made by the Permanent Representative of Belgium on behalf of the presidency of the European Union.

It is of vital importance for the Republic of Macedonia, as an immediate neighbour of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, to have a stable and transparent northern border, including with Kosovo. The Macedonian Government therefore gives full support to the efforts and measures undertaken in Kosovo by the authorities of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) to consolidate the situation by building a multi-ethnic society, strengthening the rule of law and building democratic institutions, which are prerequisites for the success of this complex mission of regional importance.

The Republic of Macedonia welcomes the strengthening of cooperation between UNMIK and the authorities in Belgrade to address issues of mutual concern, including conditions for fair participation by Serbs in the forthcoming Kosovo-wide elections. The success of the elections, in our view, will be an important step towards resolving the future status of Kosovo, taking fully into account the regional aspect of this issue and its implications for the other countries of the region. In that context, we consider indispensable the dialogue among the democratically elected representatives of Kosovo's self-government, the Serbian and Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities, and those of Montenegro.

Within the context of today's debate on Kosovo, allow me to make some comments regarding the situation in my country, the Republic of Macedonia. The signing of the Framework Agreement by political leaders under the auspices of President Trajkovski was welcomed by the Security Council as a significant step towards a peaceful outcome of the political and security crisis. In addition to that, the Secretary-General, Mr. Annan, in his letter of response to the Macedonian leadership, underlined the readiness of the United Nations to offer its full support and assistance to implement the Framework Agreement in good faith.

In stressing the relevance of these messages, I would like to draw the attention of the Council to some aspects of the security dimension of the implementation of the Framework Agreement that are directly or indirectly related to the developments in Kosovo.

The recent activities of UNMIK and KFOR authorities in Kosovo aimed at strengthening control of the border and minimizing the number of illegal border crossings and of incursions by armed extremist groups are certainly contributing to more efficient control of infiltration and illegal traffic along the border zone with Kosovo, as called for in resolution 1345 (2001). However, for the security component of the Framework Agreement to be fully effective, it is essential to ensure a complete cessation of the activities of the ethnic Albanian insurgency's instigators and supporters from Kosovo, including members of the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC).

We support the lifting of the arms embargo imposed by resolution 1160 (1998), as mentioned today in the debate, and we urge UNMIK and KFOR authorities in Kosovo to undertake the necessary measures against any possible abuse. In that regard, let me reiterate the expectations of the President and the Government of the Republic of Macedonia that UNMIK and KFOR authorities will stop the infiltration from Kosovo into the Republic of Macedonia of armed terrorist groups and logistical support; and that they will prevent all mobilization activities by former KPC fighters, as well as their joining the ranks of the National Liberation Army, as it is called today — or whatever may be the name of tomorrow's terrorist organization.

This is also of particular importance for the success of the operation being conducted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Macedonia to disarm ethnic Albanian armed groups and to ensure their complete, voluntary disbandment. The effectiveness of that operation should not be measured solely by the quantity of arms collected, but also by the creation of conditions for the cessation of hostilities and the establishment of a lasting peaceful environment for the implementation of the Framework Agreement.

In conclusion, let me recall that the Framework Agreement is based, *inter alia*, on the principles that the use of violence in pursuit of political aims is rejected completely and unconditionally; that there are no territorial solutions to ethnic issues; and that there should be closer and more integrated relations with the Euro-Atlantic community. Those values are common to

the whole region, including Kosovo. That is why we have to join our efforts in pursuing their implementation.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I now invite Mr. Guéhenno to respond as he sees fit to the comments and questions that have been raised.

Mr. Guéhenno: Several delegations have expressed their concern with respect to the events along the Macedonian border and their potential impact on the situation in Kosovo. I would like to respond to those concerns.

First, with regard to the situation on the border, I am not in a position at this stage to give additional information on the incidents mentioned by the delegation of Ukraine. But I would like to inform the Council that just yesterday no less than 35 Kosovo Albanians were arrested for illegally crossing the border into Kosovo. Over the last weekend, no less than 96 Kosovo Albanians were similarly intercepted while crossing the border. I think this shows the degree to which the Kosovo Force (KFOR) is actively patrolling the border to make sure that it does not transform Kosovo into a safe haven for extremists as the situation returns to normal in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Secondly, a question was raised by the delegation of Jamaica about the impact of border closures. Indeed, the closure of the border does complicate significantly the work of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). It also complicates police rotations. At this stage, I do not think it has yet directly affected the operations of the police. But I think it affects them indirectly, in the sense that increased economic hardship in Kosovo can certainly only play into the hands of those extremists who do not want Kosovo to return to normalcy.

More broadly, the representative of Singapore raised the issue of the impact of the events in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia on our whole strategy in Kosovo. At this stage, I would just say that this is a reminder that there will not be any lasting solution in the Balkans that does not address the regional dimension. That is true at the political level because the principles that are established in one place have validity in other places; we always have to take into consideration the implications of what is decided in one situation for other situations. That is true also in the very practical sense that we know that organized crime does not recognize borders or boundaries: there have been links between organized crime and extremist activities. Some kind of regional approach — in police work, for instance — is certainly warranted.

As far as the role of the United Nations is concerned vis-à-vis the situation in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, other organizations — the European Union, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) — have taken a leading role. The United Nations has a supportive role to play and, as the Secretary-General mentioned in the letter just cited by the representative of Macedonia, we stand ready to give our full support and to share whatever expertise we have to help in the follow-up to what is now being done by NATO in operation Essential Harvest. It is clear that that operation sends a strong political signal. It is also achieving, we hope, very practical results. But beyond the political signal that is being sent, there will certainly be a need for monitoring. There will be a need for a return to normalcy. That requires time, and we stand ready to give our support in any way that is asked of us.

The representative of Colombia asked about the registration process outside of Kosovo. I would like to emphasize that much has been done to facilitate out-of-Kosovo registration and voting. Agreements have been reached with the International Organization for Migration and with the OSCE, and between the OSCE and the relevant authorities in Serbia and Montenegro, which have allowed for the opening of registration centres in both Serbia and Montenegro, primarily in those areas where the displaced are concentrated. As was noted by the representative of Yugoslavia, we would like those practical measures to yield more results. We still hope that they will, and that more people will take advantage of the facility to register. That is a political message that is being emphasized in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. There have been articles in the press. There have been radio spots to spread the word that the possibility to register exists, and that those who can register should make good use of that possibility. Additionally, to ensure the transparency of the process, representatives of the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia are allowed to be present during the data-inputting process in both Pristina and in Vienna to make sure that everything is done in the most adequate way.

A question was also raised by the representative of Colombia on detention facilities. As I mentioned in my briefing, progress is already being made with the so-called quick-build detention facility and with the refurbishment of the larger facility of the Dubrava prison. But it is clear that with the adoption of new regulations, the legal ground upon which individuals can be charged and detained will become broader and there will probably be a need for greater detention capacities. We are confident that with the strengthening of the justice and police pillar, the issue of having adequate detention facilities in Kosovo will be addressed.

The last question you raised, Mr. President, was with respect to the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC). I would like to mention here that UNMIK recently adopted a KPC disciplinary code, and also that it relies on cooperation with KFOR for reports on acts by KPC members that would constitute criminal or serious civil offences. Whenever evidence is found, the UNMIK-KFOR Joint Executive Committee will direct the commander of the KPC to suspend immediately a KPC member who is suspected of committing an offence. That was the case, for example, following the issuing of the United States executive order at the end of June. If after that immediate suspension, the investigation confirms the suspicion, the KPC member will receive a dismissal order and will leave the KPC. I would mention in that respect that besides yesterday's case, three other KPC members were dismissed — not suspended: dismissed — in August. Others have been suspended, and we are waiting for the conclusion of those investigations to see whether they will be dismissed.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank Mr. Guéhenno for his clarifications and additional explanations. There are no more speakers on the list. The Security Council has thus completed the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.